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Franz Schubert.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

From the German of DR. HEINRICH VON KREISSE.

(Continued from page 121.)

11. In the year 1822 Schubert composed his first larger dramatic work : "Alfonso and Estrella, grand heroic-romantic opera, in three acts;" the poem by Franz von Schober.

Its fate has been already mentioned. C. M. von Weber took it with him to Berlin, where it lay unperformed, until Liszt brought it out in Weimar, on the 24th of June 1854, at the close of the opera season, in honor of the birthday of the Grand Duke.

The opera did not succeed, although it was most carefully rehearsed, and critics lavished great praise upon Herr and Frau Milde in the parts of Troila and Estrella, and upon the admirable ensemble of the choruses and orchestra. But here again the reason of the failure seems to have lain in the flat and utterly undramatic stuff of the libretto; for wherever it offered the composer the least foothold for dramatic development, he did not let the opportunity for effective music escape him:—a proof, that Schubert, under more fortunate stars, could have achieved something of importance also in the domain of Opera.

12. On the 20th of December 1813, at the theatre on the Wien, was given :

"Rosamund, Princess of Cyprus." Romantic spectacle in four acts, with choruses, musical accompaniment and dances, by Helmina von Chezy. Music by Herr Schubert."

In this case again the libretto seems to have found no mercy in the eyes of the critics. The action is as follows :

Through a paternal whim, the Princess Rosamund was brought up in shepherd life. On the completion of her eighteenth year her rank is to be revealed to all the people, and she is to assume the government. The term expires upon the 3d of June. Many wonderful things connect themselves with this event; among others the arrival of the prince of Candia, who has been betrothed to Rosamund from childhood, and who on the receipt of a mysterious letter hastens to Cyprus, but is shipwrecked on the coast and is the only person saved. Meanwhile Fulgentius, the governor of Cyprus, having ruled over it for 16 years, is so little weary of ruling that he is not at all charmed with the news of the existence of Rosamund, who had been supposed dead. She has already seen the disguised prince of Candia, and both have recognized their mutual destiny by a romantic secret sympathy. The Prince, avoiding recognition in order to try the fidelity of his beloved, and perhaps also because all his companions are drowned and he can count on no support, enters into the service of Fulgentius and wins his confidence, since he has delivered his daughter from the hands of robbers. So far all goes according to his wish; but—Fulgentius himself is madly in love with Rosamund, and, as she

cannot return his passion, he persecutes her with savage hate, accuses her of having instigated the capture of his daughter, and throws her into prison. Not content with that, he washes a letter with the most deadly poison, and letting the disguised prince into the secret of the murder, commands him to hand it to Rosamund.

She meanwhile has found means to escape; she returns to the hut of her old foster mother. There the prince of Candia finds her, and informs her of the murderous design of Fulgentius. Most unluckily the lovers are surprised by Fulgentius, and it would go hard with them, were it not that the prince persuades the tyrant that the first sight of the poisoned letter has made Rosamund crazy, which fiction the quick-witted girl supports by her actions. The credulous Fulgentius leaves the care of Rosamund to his confidant, and again all promises to turn out well. But now comes a letter from the burgomaster Albanus (the man who had written the mysterious letter to the prince of Candia), who is dissatisfied with the administration of Fulgentius. Unfortunately the latter surprises the prince in the act of reading the letter. This puts an end to his credulity; the false confidant is doomed; he must give up the letter and—die. But the prince means to live and marry, so he quickly bethinks himself to hand the poisoned letter, instead of that of Albanus, to Fulgentius; Fulgentius sticks his nose into it and—dies. And here follows a song for a finale.

The piece was found tedious, and was not often repeated. But the overture pleased very much, and a repetition was called for; (it is the one which Schubert had composed to the opera *Alfonso and Estrella*, and which appeared in a piano-forte arrangement as op. 69). So too one of the choruses; and the song, which Frau Vogel sang (as Rosamund's foster mother) was much applauded. On the whole Schubert found great encouragement, which had not been the case with his previous dramatic musical attempts. By this time there existed a firm phalanx of Schubertites, who were not behind-hand in applauding.

13. In the same year (between May 23 and Sept. 26) he composed ; "Fierabras, grand heroic-romantic opera; text by Josef Kupelwieser." The action is the following :

King Charles has gained a bloody victory over the Moorish prince and taken his son Fierabras prisoner. He had been four years before, with his sister Florinda, in Rome, where he saw Emma, the daughter of King Charles, without knowing who she was, and had sighed in love for her ever since. But Florinda beheld Roland, a knight in Emma's train, and, more fortunate than Fierabras, found her love for him reciprocated. Both parties left the holy city, on their way home, Fierabras resolved to renounce the faith to which he had thus far been attached.

The captive Moors are led before the king, and Fierabras sees among those present Emma, and learns through Eginhardt, a knight at the court of Charles, that she is the daughter of his

father's conqueror. Eginhardt, selected by his lord to go with the embassy to offer terms of peace to the Moors, appears in the garden of the brilliantly lighted palace with a lute, to bring his farewell greeting, in the silence of the night, to Emma, his beloved. During his song she steps out on the balcony, but soon disappears again; the door of the palace opens and Eginhardt is admitted. A moment afterward comes Fierabras, who, startled by the stir he hears within the house and by the call of people, who seem to be seeking somebody, steps aside, to await what will come of it. Suddenly the gate opens; Emma leads Eginhardt out, and covers the fugitive with her veil. Then Fierabras steps before them, ready with his sword to avenge the injured honor of the house. But at Emma's entreaty he suffers Eginhardt to continue his flight unmolested, and with noble resignation offers his arm to the king's daughter (whom he loves), to conduct her back into the castle. At that moment Charles with his train comes out through the gate, and, seeing his daughter on the arm of the Moor, is seized with rage at the violated hospitality, and commands his trusty Eginhardt (of whose love for Emma he knows nothing) to throw Fierabras into prison. The latter sacrifices himself for his rival and is led off in chains. Meanwhile the knights appointed for the escort of the embassy assemble, to march with colors, palms and other symbols of peace, to the camp of the Moorish prince.

The beginning of the second act brings before us again the knights, who have just crossed the limits of their native land. Eginhardt and Roland send their farewell greeting to their fatherland in a heart-felt song, which is then taken up by the chorus of knights.

Eginhardt, who has dreamily followed his companions, and who feels a mighty yearning homeward, is at his own wish left behind, and it is arranged, in case any danger threaten him, that he shall blow his horn, so that his friends may hasten to his aid. Scarcely have they gone, when Moors appear, who make Eginhardt their prisoner and drag him off with them. The knights, hastening up at the horn signal, disperse in all directions in search of him. Eginhardt is brought to the tent of the Moorish prince, who inquires of him about the fate of his son, and when he learns that he is languishing in prison, he swears destruction to the whole brood of Franks.—Florinda learns, that Roland is among the ambassadors. The knights arrive; Roland announces to the prince, that his army is beaten and that Fierabras has embraced the Christian faith. The Moorish prince curses his son and orders the ambassadors to be confined in the tower, that they may be given up to the vengeance of his warriors. Florinda resolves to rescue Roland and his friends. She hastens, a sword in one hand, a lamp in the other, into the dark room in which the knights are confined, to inform them of their danger. Presently the roll of drums resounds, with trumpet call and battle

cry of the foe. The knights defend themselves with such weapons as they can snatch up in haste. Roland and Eginhardt undertake to cut their way through the enemy to their friends, hoping to return with their aid and relieve the tower. Eginhardt succeeds, on the horse of a fallen Moor, in reaching the border; Roland is taken.

The third act begins again in the palace of king Charles. Emma with her maids is busy twining wreaths for the returning knights. King Charles enters, and his daughter, conscience-bitten at the fate of her deliverer, Fierabras, confesses to her father her love for Eginhardt and the treason of which he has been guilty. Fierabras is instantly restored to freedom. Eginhardt rushes in, relates what has transpired in the Moorish camp and begs for help. Charles commands all who are capable of bearing arms to march against the foe, and hints to Eginhardt that he must rescue his friends, if he wishes to redeem his forfeit life.

The knights still hold their own in the tower, in the hope of near assistance. Then the Moors erect a pile of wood, to burn Roland. Florinda, when she sees this scene of horror from the battlements, sticks her veil upon a lance and signalizes to the Moors, that she will surrender the bulwark.

The gate opens; Florinda and the knights come forth. The daughter of the Moorish prince throws herself at her father's feet and confesses her love for Roland. But he dooms both her and the knights to death.

Then Brutamonte rushes in with the message, that the whole Frankish host are in full march upon them. The Moors with brandished sabres crowd upon the knights; but already Eginhardt and Fierabras rush forward; Roland snatches Florinda from her father, who tries to lead her back into the tower, and is just on the point of running the Moorish prince through, when Fierabras arrests his arm, calling out to him to spare his father. King Charles and Emma appear; the overpowered prince of the Moors is exhorted to end the quarrel; Eginhardt sinks down at the king's feet. The king pardons him and leads Emma to him as his bride; the Moorish prince, softened by the intercession of his son, lays Florinda's hand in that of Roland; Fierabras himself begs of king Charles, that henceforth he may follow his victorious banners; the opera closes with a general jubilee chorus.

"Fierabras" contains 23 pieces of music, besides the overture. This is a very interesting orchestral piece of serious character, in the genuine Schubert vein, beginning with an introduction (in F, *Andante*, 3-4 time), followed by the theme (F minor, *Allegro ma non troppo*, 4-4 time), which, continually emerging again, runs like a red thread through the whole overture.

The opera begins with a chorus of court ladies in Emma's apartment in the royal palace, who are engaged in spinning (C major, *Andantino*, 6-8 time). Its melody is then repeated by a solo voice in G minor, and the chorus closes the strain with the same melody in E flat major.

A duet follows, between Emma and Eginhardt (A flat major, *Andantino*, changing toward the close to *Allegro moderato*.)

No. 3, consists of march and chorus of men and knights, followed by one of women and virgins (D major, *Allegro moderato*, 4-4); at the end a chorus of the whole, and march as at the beginning.

No. 4. Ensemble (Ogier, Roland, Charles, Eginhardt, Fierabras, Emma and chorus), with recitatives, quartet (Emma, Eginhardt, Roland, Fierabras), chorus of ladies, march and general chorus.

No. 5. Duet between Fierabras and Roland (A major, *Allegro maestoso*, 3-4).

No. 6. Finale.—The first act, filling more than 300 pages in the written score, was composed in the time between the 25th and 30th of May.

The second act begins with the beautiful song of Eginhardt and Roland (farewell to the fatherland), which is taken up and carried on by the chorus.

No. 8. An exceedingly characteristic march of the Moors, beginning in the distance and gradually approaching (F major, *Allegro vivace*); chorus of Moors, recitative-song, chorus of knights, who follow the traces of Eginhardt;—a splendidly worked, effective piece of music.

No. 9. Duet between Florinda and Maragond (A flat major, *Andante con moto*).

No. 10. Quintet (Florinda, Maragond, Eginhardt, Moorish prince, Brutamonte, in E flat major. *Andante con moto*, the largest of the concerted pieces).

No. 11. Chorus of ambassadors marching into the Moorish camp (E major, *Allegro moderato*, 4-4).

No. 12. Terzetto (Florinda, Roland, Moorish prince, in A flat major, *Allegro vivace*, 4-4); chorus of knights and Moors.

No. 13. Aria of Florinda (D major, *Allegro furioso*, 4-4).

No. 14. Chorale of captive knights.

No. 15. Scene in the tower (Florinda, Roland, the knights); recitative; duet between Roland and Florinda; chorus of knights; melodrama, orchestral music during the storming by the Moors.

No. 17. Finale, mostly melo-drama; chorus of knights.

The third act begins, like the first, with a chorus of ladies employed about Emma in the royal palace (G major, *Allegro moderato*, 6-8), out of which rises a solo song of Emma.

No. 19. Quartet between Emma, Charles, Fierabras and Eginhardt.

No. 20. Trio between Emma and Eginhardt and Fierabras going to the contest.

No. 21. Scene in the tower. Aria of Florinda with chorus (*Andante con moto*, F minor, 2-4 time), one of the most beautiful, perhaps the most beautiful piece of music in the opera. To Florinda's lament the chorus answers with consoling words (in F major). The music is so simple and affecting, the melody and its accompaniment so truly Schubert-like, that there is nothing further to be said of it.

Here follows a funeral march (B minor, *Andante*, 4-4); orchestral music continues, the tempo changing to *Allegro assai*. The knights and Florinda rush to the door, to surrender the stronghold before Roland falls a victim to the flames. Florinda's cry, repeated by the chorus of knights, forms a piece of music full of life and dramatic truth.

No. 22. Chorus of Moors, with ensemble, (*Tempo di Marcia*, D minor, 4-4). The fanatical song of the Moors, accompanied by all the noisy attributes of the Turkish music, is admirably effective.

Now follows an alternate song between Flo-

rinda and her father; choruses of knights and Moors.

No. 23. The Finale, beginning with recitatives, to which succeeds a quartet (Eginhardt, Fierabras, Roland, Charles), and the general chorus of jubilee, with which the opera ends.

"Fierabras," like most of his other operas, was never performed in public, with the exception of some fragments given by the Männergesang-verein of Vienna, at a concert for the benefit of the blind, in February 1858, which were received with the greatest applause. The libretto (consisting mainly of three-foot Iambic and Trochaic rhymes, with some recitative and prose), does not, so far as the language is concerned, rise much above mediocrity. But it affords some dramatic opportunities, which Schubert has improved. Most of the arias are rather in the song style; but some of the choruses, and the scenes in the tower during the preparations for storming it, would not fail to be effective on the stage.

(To be continued.)

The Life of a Composer, an Arabesque.

BY CARL MARIA VON WEBER.

(Continued.)

[Here a considerable hiatus occurs, several pages containing only broken passages or heads of topics on which the author probably intended to have enlarged.]

THE CONCERT. On leaving my lodgings in the morning, I see a most interesting young lady get into a coach—learn that her name is Emily—an determined to inquire further respecting her.

Engagement of musicians—the oboist's wife will not allow him to come to terms, unless the same conditions are agreed to with her friend the clarinet player—scruples with regard to precedence.

At last six flutes are engaged, and among them a dilettante, being his first performance on the instrument.

Am thus addressed by my landlord, on my return to my lodgings: "So, sir, you are going to give a concert; it is known everywhere; the girl who went to fetch our beer heard them talking it over in the public house.

Evening comes—concert empty—all the world gone to see the dancing dogs which had just arrived in town—more than half my band decoyed away to this exhibition, twenty-four kreutzers (one shilling) a head more having been offered them.

The thought of Emily inspires me, and makes me play my part with spirit.

Departure for a larger town—feeling of solitude and loneliness among strangers—introduction to Dihl and his friendly circle—who should I meet there but Emily, the lady whom I had seen in the act of departure for X—, and who had made such an impression on my heart!

Sleepless night.

Data for a musical madhouse.

LETTER TO ERNSTHOF.—Well, I have taken leave of my good friend A., and have again dashed into the vortex of the world. I can better endure the storms and buffets of fate than the gnawing pangs of disappointed hope that prey upon the heart in secret. As the soldier learns to despise peril in the dangerous sports of death, so will I acquire confidence and self-possession amidst the trials and tumults of the world.

I could never bring myself to admire those boasted martyrs to their own fancy or enthusiasm, who have rendered themselves illustrious either by self-destruction or some other striking final chord.

The smallest flame has its moment of brightness, and there is a moment (I might term it the focus in the burning-glass of existence) in the life of every man, in which he feels himself enkindled, and capacitated to perform something great.

The petty trials, the constant recurring vexations of daily life are the true touchstones by which the glittering gold of your philosophers is put to the test, and which, when submitted to this scrutiny, is so often found to sink into common metal.

How often has it fallen to my lot to observe minds called great, and which at a distance appeared so estimable, and so free from imperfection, dwindled into the most absolute littleness when seen within the narrow limits of the domestic circle—abroad, ever gentle in comportment and pleasing in demeanor; at home, acting the tyrant, and storming at the poor

passive wife, if but a pipe be laid out of its proper place—calm and unmoved amidst the ruins of a falling state; fretful and discomposed if but a favorite flower droop and die.

Yet, knowing and feeling all this, how impossible have I always found it—how impossible do I find it at the moment I am writing this—to soar above the annoyances of the instant, and attain to anything like the simple repose of greatness.

What life is more full of perpetually recurring annoyances, of petty evils and vexations, than that of an artist? Free as a god, he ought to stand erect in the consciousness of his power, and to be armed in his art as in a panoply of steel.

"The world, the world, is mine!"

can he exclaim as long as he keeps from mingling in its tumult; but these airy dreams vanish, and the semblance of power disappears the moment he enters the empty circle of action of every-day people.

Scarcely have I set my foot over the threshold, than I am beset by such a host of evils and annoyances, that, in spite of my experience, in spite of my resolution to persevere, I would fain change my purpose and retrace my steps. Were not single moments capable of compensating long years of suffering: were it not for the certainty of possessing a friend who anticipates my every thought, what would become of me in this ever-renewed vortex of conflicting feelings, in which my soul is tossed?

Scarcely do I recognize you; your figure flits before my fancy, surrounded by flames, like some divinity encircled by a halo of glory. Never will the moment of our meeting be obliterated from my memory. Amidst the conflict of elements did fate cement that union which the base and the designing had attempted to destroy. O! let me again recall to your remembrance the day on which I lost all, and found all; let me renew the fading image of those years, in which I experienced the tender cares of the best of mothers—years which are the more precious as their number was so small. My father, who was then in affluent circumstances, spared no expense in giving me the best possible education; I was the idol of his heart; every care was taken to instill into my mind, which was naturally susceptible, a love for the arts. The little talent I possessed began to unfold itself, and was in imminent danger of being ruined forever; for my father knew no other happiness than that of showing me off. Everything I did was excellent; to the numerous strangers who visited our house he cried me up as a prodigy; I was placed on a level with the first of artists; and thus, without being aware of the extent of the evil, he was gradually destroying that feeling of modest diffidence, which is the life and soul of youthful exertion. At this critical period, heaven sent me in my mother a guardian angel, who preserved me from the precipice. At the same time that she convinced me of my nothingness and insufficiency, she had the address not to stifle the struggling flame—not to cramp those energies which lead to excellence—but to give them a proper direction.

At this period I was fond of romances, and frequently ventured far beyond my depth. I travelled early into the dangerous ideal world, but not altogether without advantage; from the images of the innumerable heroes successively presented to my mind, I learned to cull out the ideal of excellence. My father travelled with me; I saw a great part of Europe, but only as in a mirror or in a dream, for I saw it through the eyes of others. I increased my stock of knowledge, and from being a mere empiric, betook myself to theoretical works. A new world was opened to me; I thought to exhaust the treasures of all knowledge; I devoured all systems; I blindly built my faith upon the authority of great names, according to the estimation in which they were held in the world, and—I knew nothing.

It was now that my good mother died; she had not laid down any determinate plan for me to pursue, but she had informed and stored my mind with those general principles which will ever form the props and groundwork of my future life and conduct.

I lived in the same town with you; and though you were an artist like myself, and on the same instrument too, yet I was long on friendly terms with you, without cherishing any other feeling than that of honorable emulation. At length, designing and malicious persons whispered into my too credulous ear, that you had spoken of me and of my talent in terms of disrespect; that you were envious of my growing fame, and had been devising a thousand schemes to supplant me. My self-love was wrought upon, and poor weak mortal that I was, I suffered myself to be imperceptibly betrayed into bitterness against you, and ended by hating and despising you.

The alarms of war came at this period to disturb

the general repose. You had lately returned from a professional tour in which you had greatly added to your former fame, and were about to proceed on another journey of the same kind. I was desirous of following your example, but could not obtain the consent of my father. At this time, a horde of plunders overran our little town; and all was depredation and alarm. My father's house fell a prey to the flame. Distracted at the idea of losing my favorite books, and forgetful of everything and of myself too, I flew up the burning staircase, and not appearing for some time, was given up for lost. Scarcely had I reached the street in safety, when I learned that, at the risk of your life, you had rushed into the flames to save me. My breast, which had been but too long closed against you, was at once opened to the impressions of love, gratitude and affection. The entreaties of a father, the urgent representations of the multitude, death itself staring me in the face, nothing could prevent me entering the burning ruins to perform the same generous office which you had intended for me. Through waving flames, falling beams and suffocating smoke, I forced a passage and found you, who were seeking me. Forgetful of danger, we flew into each other's embrace, and in the midst of the raging elements, and at the momentary hazard of falling a sacrifice to delay, we cemented that bond of love which was never again to be dissolved.

The generous service which you thus rendered me; the subsequent kindness with which you imparted to me without reserve the fruits of your knowledge and experience, showing me the world as it is, and not as it had been seen in my day dreams—teaching me to feel, that, after all, the man is before the artist, and that due honor is to be paid to the citizen and to the relations in which he stands—how can I repeat all this, and not feel impressed with a deep sense of what I owe you; with a desire to proclaim aloud, that if you have given to the world an artist, he is a grateful one, and that it is from your abundance he has been replenished.

It is a source of painful reflection to me, that the very course you took to serve me, should also prove the cause of our separation. You gave me to reap the harvest of that soil, which you had sown and prepared. The part of Germany through which you intended to make a professional tour, where you were expected, announced, and recommended, you transferred to me. If the rare self-devotion of an artist, in deputing another to fill his place, raised the curiosity of many in my favor, and if the incitement not to dishonor your recommendation gave a new impulse to my exertions, and rendered my performance not altogether unworthy of notice, to whom is the merit due, but to yourself? You, whom I so misunderstood; you, who with the generous heart and enlarged soul of a true artist, thinking you recognized in me a true votary of the art, watched over my weal, and labored to promote my rising talents.

Those only who know the thousand ramifications through which the interests of a professional tour are spread—who know that the fame of an artist travels through the world in a direction peculiar to itself, and that the same sparks which emanate from genius will be kindled into a flame in one place, while in another they will be suffered to evaporate without notice—those only can justly appreciate the greatness of the sacrifice which you made in my behalf.

I, however, can duly appreciate it; and if I now repeat it with honest pride and triumph of heart, it is because I feel its value more sensibly than ever I did before.

See, dearest *confere*, how I am constantly betraying myself; at one moment exhibiting an humble pride, at another a proud humiliation; alternately elevated and depressed.

But am I a solitary instance of this? or am I to consider it as belonging to the nature of artists in general? I could certainly wish that the latter were the case, but cannot see sufficient reason for concluding it to be so; I think it must rather be ascribed to that power, which I feel at times bearing the mastery within me, and whose weight I cannot always shake off.

But I think I see you laughing at my reveries: I therefore return to the purport of my letter.

It has often been a subject of regret to me, that all I know both of the theoretical and practical parts of my art, (and I have read and studied much,) has been learned in a desultory manner; one part being tacked on to another, rather than forming a consistent whole.

I have experienced the evil of this in many instances, and particularly on a late occasion. A *Doctor Medicine*, a confoundedly shrewd fellow, applied to me to learn thorough bass. He so pestered me with his *whys* and *wherefores*, and setting at nought all the respect due to the authority of great names, was so bent upon giving a reason of his own

for everything, that in spite of all my book-learning, I was frequently reduced to silence. These daily disputes grew at last so annoying, that I was obliged to come to something like terms with my restive pupil; I therefore at last succeeded in bringing him to agree that certain things were to be taken for granted as allowable, and others as prohibited, without stating the *why*, or being at the trouble to learn the *wherefore*.

It is said that Bach did *this*, that Handel would not have done *that*, and that Mozart would have done the *other*; and should a composer have the good fortune to hit upon something which these geniuses did not, there are not wanting those who would strike it out of the piece altogether, because no precedent can be found *why* it should be so. In no art is there so great a want of standard rules, of a sure foundation upon which to raise the superstructure, as in music. It is always feeling, and nothing but feeling—but who will have the presumption to say—"mine alone is the right one?" Henceforth, therefore, I am resolved to treat the art, like every other science, conformably to school rules. To the disciple in other sciences it is said: 'You have first to learn *this*, and then to proceed to the *other*; from such a principle such a consequence follows; and so on till you are finished.' Finished, you will say: assuredly; always understanding the term relatively, and within certain limits.

[Here several blank pages occur in the manuscript, in the midst of which is one, apparently the heading of some new essay. Inscribed—]

"Fragment of a musical tour which may, perhaps, some day make its appearance."

At length the writer recommences his sprightly and imaginative sketches as follows.]

THE DREAM.—Delighted with the performance of an admirable symphony, and satisfied with an excellent dinner, I fell into a gentle slumber, and in a dream beheld myself suddenly transported back to the concert-room, where I found all the instruments in grand council under the presidency of the sweet-voiced Oboe. To the right, a party had arranged themselves, consisting of a Viola d'amore, Corno Bassetto, Viol di Gamba, and Flauto Dolce, each pouring forth melancholy complaints, as to the degeneracy of the present era of music, and full of regrets for the good old times: to the left, the lady Oboe was haranguing a circle of Clarinets and Flutes, both old and young, some without keys, and some decked in the finery of modern additions; and in the centre was the courtly Pianoforte, attended by several sprightly Violins, who were well read in the schools of Pleyel and Giroetz. The Trumpets and Horns had formed themselves into a thinking clavicle in a corner; while the Piccolo flutes and Flageolets occasionally filled the whole room with their squeaking and infantine strains. Surveying them all with an air of satisfaction, the lady Oboe declared, that the whole of this arrangement was admirable, quite à la Jean Paul, and in strict conformity with the system carried to such perfection by Pestalozzi.

All appeared very comfortable, when, on a sudden, the morose Contrabasso, accompanied by a couple of kindred Violoncellos, burst into the room in a transport of passion, and threw himself so impulsively into the director's chair, that the Pianoforte, as well as all the rest of the stringed instruments, uttered an involuntary sound of terror.

"It were enough," he exclaimed, "to play the devil with me, if such compositions were to be given daily. Here am I, just come from the rehearsal of a symphony of one of the newest composers; and although, as is known, my structure is none of the weakest, and my constitution pretty tough, I could scarce hold it out longer; five minutes more, and I am sure my chest must have given way, and my life-strings have been snapped in twain. Really, my friends, I have been made to bellow and bluster like an old he-goat in hysterics! If any more such work goes on, and I am left to do the duty of a dozen violins and my own too, curse me if I do not turn dancing master's *kit*, and gain my livelihood by the performance of Müller and Kauer's waltzes and minuets!"

First Violoncello (wiping the perspiration from his forehead). "Certainly; *cher père* is right; I am perfectly exhausted by the task I have had to perform. Never since the operas of Cherubini, do I recollect experiencing so violent an *échauffement*."

All the Instruments. "Explain, explain on!"

Second Violoncello. "What? the symphony? No words could explain it, and if they could, you would not endure to sit and hear it. According to the principles which my divine master, Romberg, instilled into me, the composition we have just executed is a sort of musical monster, which has no other merit than that of a vain attempt to be new and original, at the expense of the truth and consistency."

Why, we were made to climb up aloft like the violin and!"

First Violoncello (interrupting him). "As if we could not do it quite as well!"

A Violin. "Let every one keep within his own rank."

A Viola. "Ay, or what will remain for me to do, who stand between the two?"

First Violoncello. "Oh, as to you, you are out of the question. Your utility is merely to keep in unison with us; or, at best, to produce a tolerable tremolo, as, for instance, in *Der Wasserträger* [the Water-Carrier]; but as to what regards fine tone!"

First Oboe. "Ah, as to that, who will venture to contest the point with me?"

First Clarinet. "Madame, you will surely allow us to say something on that head. I suppose we may claim some talent!"

First Flute. "Yes, for marches, and for pleasing the holiday folks."

First Bassoon. "Who comes nearer to the divine tenor than myself?"

First Horn. "Why, surely, you won't pretend to the delicacy and power which all the world allows to me?"

Pianoforte (with dignity). "And what is all this, compared to the body of harmony which I possess? While you are severally but parts of a whole, I am all sufficient; and!"

All the Instruments (vociferating together). "Peace, peace, braggart. You have no power to sustain a single note."

First Oboe. "No portamento."

Second Flageolet. "Yes, there Mamma is in the right."

Second Violoncello. "If a stranger heard this uproar, Ladies and Gentlemen, might he not say with justice that, sticklers as we are for individual merit, we are, as a body, the very foes to harmony?"

Trumpets and Drums (falling in, fortissimo).—"Silence! hear us: What, pray, would be the effect of any composition without our assistance? Unless we kept the game alive, who would applaud, think you?"

Flutes. "Noise delights vulgar souls; the true sublime consists in the soft and touching."

First Violin. "And but for my conducting, in what a pretty predicament would the whole of you be!"

Contrabasso (starting from the chair). "You will at least allow that I sustain the entire effect; and that without me the whole would be nothing."

Onnes (each starting up). "I alone am the life and soul—without me no composition would be worth the hearing!"

At this moment the Director entered the apartment; all was agitation and alarm, and the different instruments huddled into the corner together; they knew whose skilful hand could call forth and combine their powers.

"What!" cried he, "again in open rebellion! Now, mind me—the *Sinfonia Eroica* of Beethoven is about to be performed; and every one of you who can move key or member will be then put in active requisition."

"O! for heaven's sake! anything but that!" was the general exclamation.

"Rather," said the *Viola*, "let us have an Italian opera; then we may occasionally nod."

"Nonsense!" replied the Director, "you must accomplish the task. Do you imagine that, in these enlightened times, when all rules are set at nought, and all difficulties cleared at a bound, a composer will, out of compliment to you, cramp his divine, gigantic, and his high soaring fancies? Thank heaven, there is no longer any question as to regularity, perspicuity, keeping, and truth of expression; these are left to such old-fashioned masters as Gluck, Handel and Mozart. No! attend to the materials of the most recent symphony that I have received from Vienna, and which may serve as a recipe for all future ones. First, a slow movement full of short, broken ideas, no one of which has the least connection with another—every ten minutes or so, a few striking chords! then a muffled rumbling on the kettle drums, and a mysterious passage or so for the violas, all worked up with a due proportion of pauses and stops. Finally, when the audience has just entered into the spirit of the thing, and would as soon expect the devil himself as an *allegro*—lo!—a raging movement, in managing which the principal consideration is, to avoid following up any particular idea—thus leaving more to the hearer to make out himself. Sudden transitions also, from one key to another, should by no means be omitted: nor need this put one out of the way; to run once through the semitones, as Paer, for instance, has done in his *Leontore*, and drop into that key which is most convenient, is sufficient, and you have a modulation off hand. The grand thing is to avoid every thing

that looks like a conformity to rule—rules are made for every-day men, and do not cramp the freedom of genius." While the learned Director was thus exclaiming, suddenly a string of the guitar, which was hanging on the wall near me, snapped, and I awoke, to my no small vexation, for I was on the high road towards becoming a great composer of the newest school.

I ought, however, to have been thankful for the little incident that had awakened me, for I had overslept myself, and I hastened to put a finishing hand to the piece which I had left upon my desk. On running it over, I was delighted to find that it was not according to the recipe of the learned Director, and with spirit buoyant with hope, I went to finish the evening at the theatre, and witness the performance of *Don Juan*.

* * Here another long blank occurs, which seems to indicate that the sketch was taken up at intervals, and written with the freshness of passing events upon the author's vivid fancy.

The company had assembled early, and, as usual, the fine arts, and everything connected with them were the topics of conversation. In the midst of a spirited discussion, Dihl entered with a face brightening with joy, and exclaimed, "Only imagine; we are to have the tragedy of *Wallenstein*, and what is more, it is to be represented entire—entire, I repeat it. I feel assured that you will all join with me in saying that it will be a most gratifying thing to the lovers of Schiller. We have hitherto been accustomed to see this production of his muse fly with clipped pinions; now shall we behold the royal eagle soar majestically on high, with proud and unimpeded flight."

"But tell me," said he, turning to Felix, "how could any management have been so silly as never to have attempted this before?"

Felix. The fact is, that what actors and managers chiefly aim at is effect; the public wish to see the whole of a piece. It is, however, in consequence of such effect being produced, that the public are led to wish for the exhibition of the whole. Such is the case with the works of Schiller, and such will be the case with respect to Shakespeare.

Dihl. I am quite of your opinion: and it is my firm persuasion, that totality of effect can be produced only by the whole of a composition.

Felix. Undoubtedly so, if by totality of effect you mean the realization of the aim and intention of the poet.

The poet first imagines his work; he weaves it of those invisible threads, the ends of which attach to the original design on which the foundation is laid. Hence his poem will often extend beyond the limits which custom has prescribed as the measured duration to dramatic works. One of your quick-sighted managers, accustomed to judge of the proportions of a production by certain rules of practical utility, or rather of convenience, takes the book in his hand, and begins to cut and clear the forest. In so doing, he doubtless sacrifices much which is excellent in itself, and which, according to the poet's views, is absolutely necessary to the piece. But it is really not so, provided the connexion of the parts and the consistency of the whole be preserved; for then the spectator will be enabled to supply, by his own feelings, the subtle interior organic designs conceived, and carried into effect by the poet.

The process is this: the spectator is moved, and is desirous of repeating the enjoyment within himself. There are single moments of delight which he wishes to seize, and as it were to embody for ever. He recalls to mind what excited his emotions in the representation; and afterwards, upon perusing the work entire and uncurtailed, he is delighted to find that the same feelings which arose in his mind during the representation are developed in the work of the poet; with this difference only, that they are most perfectly and vividly portrayed there, and assume a beauty and consistency of form which they could not attain in his own vague and fluctuating fancy.

Now he has full possession of the poet; and, from this moment he is desirous of having the work represented in its original form, uncurtailed of its proportions.

Now does he discover deficiencies where none before were seen to exist; now does that appear to be a mutilation, which before seemed to be nothing more than a necessary compression. Now has he also enlarged his patience, so that he can bestow a longer and more undivided attention than he before imagined possible. A well-known garden now lies before him; at every step he expects to meet with flowers whose beauty and fragrance were already known to him; and he enjoys in anticipation the lovely prospect that will burst upon his view. He is already familiar with this, yet it raises fresh delight every time it is seen. The first pleasure experienced in hurrying

over the scene, was of a more indefinite kind; now that he is become familiar with the objects, it assumes a more positive, and therefore a more tranquil character.

Dihl. But, my good sir, who compelled this man to "hurry over the scene," as you express it. Why did he not begin by taking a quiet walk and surveying every thing leisurely! Here lies the mischief of the thing, that when people travel to see the monuments of art, or to visit the theatre, they must needs put on the seven-leagued boots of the pygmy in the fable.

Felix. *Omnis comparatio claudicat*, as the old adage has it. But, tell me, do you not think that the usual length of time adopted for dramatic works has been calculated according to the nature of the spectators; and that, like all measures and degrees of proportion it has, when once established, imperceptibly acquired the force of law in human life? Tell me, whether in following the development of a dramatic work, you are able to keep attention upon the stretch for more than three hours in succession? Tell me, also whether the impatience felt to trace the progress of the action has not frequently deprived you of the enjoyment of the single parts, and of the beauties which accompany their slow and gradual development? I see you are prepared to controvert my position by the argument, that if these be the object and end of a drama, it need not be seen a second time, as all interest would cease after a first representation.

I do not, however, consider these as the principal end and object of the drama; on the contrary, I am convinced that that must be a poor one indeed, in which the interest of the plot is wanting.

And yet, after all, the dry fact is not of such fearful importance; and what can be comprised in three lines of a newspaper, need not be a subject of such terrible alarm. No, it is by the proper employment of the ways and means of art, in representing the operations of the interior life, and the actions resulting therefrom—in other words, characters and effective pictures of passion—it is by these that the poet fulfills the task imposed upon the dramatic art by the spectator. If in the repetition of a dramatic work, with the plot of which we are already acquainted, these do not possess the same interest as at the first, representation, it is a proof that the means have failed in producing their effect. Such a work is entitled to no other appellation than that of a *knall-und-effekt-stück* a (thing "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.") a piece without the charm of interior truth, and consequently without the principle of enduring life.

Dihl. I am curious to know how you will apply all this to dramatic music. To which will you allow the precedence—to the action, or the repose of the passions, as the proper groundwork for music? By the term *repouse* (a very unsuitable one, perhaps) I mean the seizing a moment of passion, in contradistinction to the march of the action.

Felix. You have hit off in two words the great stumbling block of all operas and of their composers. How difficult is it for the latter to prove themselves capable of creating a grand object, one which, being once received into the mind, remains stamped forever there.

This is the work of master-minds only. It is for men of middling talents to dazzle and surprise: to captivate the senses by single beauties, leaving totality of effect wholly out of the question. In no production of art is this fault more difficult to be guarded against than in the opera. This is the great divergent point between the drama and the opera. I mean such an opera as the German taste requires: a complete work of art; a work in the formation of which all the tributary arts, by blending one with the other, and sacrificing their own individuality, create a new being which at once is, and is not themselves.

Now what is the history of opera in general? Is it not a few single favorite pieces that decide their success? These single pieces do not melt and blend into the whole, so as at the conclusion of the piece to disappear in the general effect, but stand prominently forward as isolated groups, having little or no connexion with the main figure. In a perfect opera, the first that ought to strike us is the whole effect; afterwards, upon a more intimate acquaintance we may dwell with pleasure upon the single component parts. But the peculiar nature and mechanism of an opera, which consists in an assemblage of different parts, each perfect in itself, and yet each essential to the perfection of the whole, presents difficulties which but few heroes of the art have been able to surmount. Every single piece employed in the structure of the musical edifice should form a perfect organic whole, and yet in the general aspect of the building should disappear as a part. In a word, an *ensemble* piece will present a kind of Janus head, in which two

and the gov-ern-ment shall be up-on his shoul -
der,
be up-on his shoul - der,

der, up-on his shoulder, and his name shall be call-ed
and the government shall be up-on his shoulder, and his name shall be call-ed
and his name shall be call-ed
and the gov-ern-ment shall be up-on his shoulder, and his name shall be call-ed

f Won-derful! Coun-sel-lor! the Mighty God! the Ev-er-last-ing Father! the
f Won-derful! Coun-sel-lor! the Mighty God! the Ev-er-last-ing Father! the
f Won-derful! Coun-sel-lor! the Mighty God! the Ev-er-last-ing Father! the

Prince of Peace!

Prince of Peace! unto us a child is born, un-to us a son is

Prince of Peace! For un-to us a child is born.....

un-to us a son is giv'n,

given, and the gov-ernment shall be up-on his shoul -

un-to us a son is given,

and his name shall be called

der; and his name shall be called

and his name shall be called

and the government shall be up-on his shoul - - der; and his name shall be called

f Won-derful! Counsellor! the Mighty God! the Ev-er-lasting Father! the
 f Won-derful! Counsellor! the Mighty God! the Ev-er-lasting Father! the
 f Won-derful! Counsellor! the Mighty God! the Ev-er-lasting Father! the
 Prince of Peace! For unto us a child is born,
 Prince of Peace! For unto us a child is born,
 Prince of Peace! unto us a child is born,
 Prince of Peace! For unto us a child is born,
 un-to us a son is
 us a child is born.....
 un-to us a son is
 un-to us a son is given,

giv - en,
 and the gov-ern-ment shall
 giv - en, and the gov-ern-ment shall be up - on his shoul - - - der;
 be up - on his shoul - - - der; and his
 and the gov-ern-ment shall be up - on his shoulder; and his
 and his
 and the gov-ern-ment shall be up - on his shoulders; and his
 name shall be eal - led f Won - der-ful! Coun - sel-lor!
 name shall be eal - led f Won - der-ful! Coun - sel-lor!
 name shall be eal - led f Won - der-ful! Coun - sel-lor!

Pedals

different faces will be seen at once, yet both belonging to the same individual.

The epoch in which we live, fruitful in excitement, has subjected us to the two extremes, the two rigid task masters—death or pleasure. Overwhelmed by the horrors of war, and rendered familiar with every species of misery, men have betaken themselves to the more coarse and exciting pleasures of art, as a means of relief again the pressure of evil. The theatre has been changed into a raree-show, in which, impatient of that calm and quiet enjoyment which the master-pieces of art afford, the restless mind seeks relief and excitement in splendid scenery, in broad humor, in melodies calculated to tickle the ear, or harmonies of the most stormy kind, and by machinery ingenious in its contrivance, but without object or moral purpose. Accustomed in daily life to the strong and the stimulating, nothing but pieces of that character is relished by frequenters of the theatre.

Ah! exclaimed Dihl, how seldom does the hearer bring with him that calm and unbiased state of mind which is necessary to the proper enjoyment of a work of art! The claims made upon the musical art, increase in the same proportion as the English national debt, and in both instances the debtor and the creditor may be considered as but one and the same person. But these claims upon the ways and means of the art must have their limit; otherwise what else can be expected than a total bankruptcy? The riches of the musical art, which have grown out of the improvements in the instrumental department, have been most shamefully abused. Harmonic luxury, or the introduction of overloaded accompaniments, even on the most trifling occasions, has risen to its height. The trombone is a common seasoning, and no composer can make any progress without four horns at least; thus, as the French have refined their *goût* to such a pitch, as to have blunted the very edge of taste, in the same manner our blotters of music paper, mistaking, in the giddy vertigo of their delirium, ears for feeling and feeling for ears, have perfectly revolutionized the art. These have butchered clearness and simplicity, as heretofore those butchered the freedom of the people—we have trampled on the laws of harmony, as they once did on the laws of nations—they have broken down the protecting barriers of the pure and the beautiful, and with savage joy—

Hold, hold! cried Felix; don't let your zeal thus hurry you away. In the midst of your flaming declamations, you forget, that though Spontini (for I know it is to him you allude) was more misled than benefited by his attempt to reach the depth and romantic enthusiasm of Mozart, as well as the truth and power of the declamation of Gluck; though he was compelled by the obtuse nerves of the public for which he wrote, to be in continual search of strong effects, to underline every word with harmony, and carry every string to the very verge of caricature; yet that he is a composer gifted with great genius—his works are cast in a mould of his own creation, and even if they are not destined to enjoy a very prolonged existence, on account of the absence of pure classical taste, yet will they always be remarkable in the history of the art, as singular examples of the amalgamation of two opposite styles.

But still more injurious, and, for the moment, more powerful, is the influence of the Rossini taste. It comes like the Sirocco-wind from the south, but its burning heat will soon be cooled. The mania will be but of short duration, like the bite of the tarantula, which sets people dancing insanely one moment, and leaves them exhausted on the ground the next.

At this instant a gentleman, who was seated at the pianoforte, interrupted the conversation by striking up the Tarantula dance, which he rattled out at a most furious rate. And what should he append to it, by way of a parody, but the famed *Di tanti palpiti*, with variations, to the infinite amusement of the whole company.

(To be continued.)

The Handel Festival at the Crystal Palace.

(From the London Times.)

THIRD DAY, SATURDAY, JUNE 28.

As it was in 1857, and as it was in 1859, so it has turned out in 1862. The third of the Handel commemorations, and the first "Handel Triennial Festival"—the name under which these unprecedented gatherings are, we believe, henceforth to be celebrated—has further strengthened a conviction, becoming more and more general, that the oratorio of *Israel in Egypt* (or *Exodus*) is the grandest choral work of the grandest of composers for the choir; and that nothing but adequate execution is needed to persuade the less initiated multitudes of a fact which musicians have long held to be indisputable. *Israel* is not only

the greatest pecuniary but the greatest musical success of the week. More than this, it may be affirmed, without hesitation, that such a performance as that of yesterday was never before listened to in England or elsewhere. In no other country, perhaps, under any circumstances, could the indispensable material be brought together; and even were it possible, by any contrivance, to combine them, in no other country is there a building sufficiently vast to contain, or sufficiently convenient to accommodate for the purpose, so large a concourse of singers and players. That the festival of 1857 was not a mere whim on the part of the Sacred Harmonic Society, and some influential members of the Crystal Palace Company, plainly appeared in 1859, when the centenary of Handel's death was commemorated by another, in every sense superior; and that, having gone so far and done so much, the original projectors (all, fortunately, for the lovers of Handel's music, alive and active at their posts) were determined to proceed with and, if possible perpetuate their scheme by renewals of the festival at stated intervals, so as to give it a place among—or, in strict truth, to put it at the head of—the periodical music meeting of Great Britain, the series of admirable performances of which the third and last took place yesterday, before an assembly of nearly 17,000 persons, leaves no room to doubt. The "Handel Triennial Festival" may be now looked upon as an institution, the permanency of which no longer depends upon the caprice of individuals, the chances of meeting with such a suitable *locale*, the ways and means of "organization," or, indeed, upon any ordinary accidents and contingencies. The first celebration may be said to have taken place this week, and with a result that has every right to be hailed as a succession of artistic triumphs.

The performance commenced yesterday nearly half an hour later than usual—by which nothing was lost; on the contrary, a good deal was gained, inasmuch as the great majority of the audience were comfortably seated before the conductor gave the signal to begin; and thus all that solemn opening which sets forth the afflictions of the Israelites under their perverse and cruel taskmasters was heard without interruption. The tenor recitative, "Now there arose a new King over Egypt" (Mr. Sims Reeves)—so apparently simple, but, in truth, so artfully contrived a preface to the colossal work that follows—was once arrested attention; and this was never once disturbed until the end of the first part—description of the plagues and miracles by which the God of the Israelites, through "Moses, his servant, and Aaron, whom he had chosen," delivered his people from the land of Ham. Considering, indeed, that nearly the whole of the first part consists of choruses, so close an attention, so marked and lively an interest, says no little for the musical taste and feeling of the vast assembly. True, these choruses are one and all graphic and superb; and true their execution, by the singers and players who, filling the enormous orchestra to the roof, might well be allowed to represent the multitude whose sufferings and miraculous release from captivity the oratorio celebrates, was unexceptionably good. But it is only very recently that *Israel in Egypt*—never appreciated while Handel lived—has been properly understood; and not more than thirteen years have elapsed since the Sacred Harmonic Society first had the courage to represent it precisely as the composer wrote it, without interpolating songs and duets, omitting choruses or otherwise sacrificing this divine masterpiece on the altar of Mammon.—The impression produced by the oratorio "in its integrity" was, therefore, a gratifying proof of the advance we have made in the right direction. "And the children of Israel sighed"—the chorus to which the tenor solo is a prelude—was well delivered.—Here, in his reiteration of the word "sighed," and his treatment of the sentence "and their cry came up to God" (to say nothing of many more remarkable points), Handel has reached the height of pathos; just as, in "They loathed to drink of the river," he expressed the horror with which the Egyptians turned away from the water with a power that almost makes the hearer sympathize with their aversion.—Never was the severe style, which attains its furthest limits in "fugue," applied to more legitimate purpose than in this most impressive chorus. Effectively as the one that precedes it was delivered, the execution of this was even better. The singers had warmed to their task, and it was evident they had resolved to make the last day of the festival the first in point of excellence. Mad. Sainton-Dolby gave the quaint air, "Their land brought forth frogs"—the only one of the plagues which, for reasons that need not be discussed, Handel has not described in chorus—with admirable self-possession, the characteristic orchestral accompaniment being subdued to a nicety. From this to the end of the first part the chorus have all

the work to do. An unbroken series of eight pieces—during the progress of which the interest gradually accumulates, until it attains its highest point in the "Rebuke of the Red Sea," and the total destruction of Pharaoh's host, leaves them without an instant's rest. The plague of flies and lice and locusts, so graphically delineated in the superb antiphonal chorus, "He spake the word;" that of the hailstones and the fire, set forth with astonishing vigor in "He gave them hailstones for rain;" the darkness covering the land, presented in choral recitative, through a succession of modulations so strange and yet so masterly as to have excited the wonder of musicians; the sacrifice of the first-born, that last and not least terrible of plagues, conveyed in one of the most energetic of the fugued choruses; the delivery of the chosen people, who are led forth "like sheep," laden "with silver and gold," and "not one feeble person among their tribes;" the joy of the Egyptians at their departure ("And Egypt was glad"—another happy application of the severer fugal style of writing); the drying up of the Red Sea, the passage through the deep, and the overwhelming of the Egyptian host, of whom not one is left—included in a single chorus of three distinct parts, surpassing all the rest in grandeur; and, lastly, the fear of the people, who, impressed by "that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians," believe in Him and "in His servant Moses"—are alternately delineated with a sublimity of which only Handel possessed the secret, and succeed each other without intermission, so as to form an uninterrupted chain of descriptive pieces altogether unparalleled. The brief pause allowed by Mr. Costa between each two of the choruses, though unauthorized by the score, was by no means unadvisable. It allowed the singers to attack one after another with all the more spirit; and certainly we never heard anything to approach the precision, force, and grandeur of their delivery. We cannot enter into a detailed account of the execution of each successive piece; nor is it necessary, where such general excellence was shown. Chorus after chorus was heard with delight and applauded with fervor; and so unanimous was the demand for a repetition of "He gave them hailstones," that Mr. Costa had no alternative but to comply. As an example of unfailing intonation, "He sent a thick darkness" has never been excelled in our remembrance. The choruses in the second part—the *Song of Moses*, recapitulating the miracles described in the first—although more intricate and difficult in many instances, were equally well given. "The horse and his rider," with which the song of thanksgiving begins and ends, and "Thy right hand, O Lord," its rival in vigor and brilliancy, produced an effect that may be described as "electric;" while even those most elaborate and recondite pieces, "With the blast of Thy nostrils," and "The people shall hear and be afraid," which seldom escape censure, inasmuch as they are seldom irreproachably rendered, were as nearly as possible faultless. In short, the choral performance of yesterday was the triumph of the festival.

It is no easy task for solo singers to produce a marked sensation in the oratorio of *Israel in Egypt*. Though he has not dispensed with them altogether, Handel has awarded them but few opportunities for distinction. The lengthy duet for bass voices—"The Lord is a man of war"—is, however, so dramatic that it almost universally wins applause; and this was the case now, thanks to the forcible declamation of Sig. Belletti and Mr. Weiss. Mad. Sington, besides the air we have mentioned, gave "Thou shalt bring them in" in the purest and most classical style, and (with Mr. Sims Reeves) "Thou in Thy mercy"—a somewhat ineffective duet, as well as it could possibly be sung. Mlle. Titien had only one favorable chance for display—namely, the solos of Miriam the Prophetess, which precede the final chorus, "Sing to the Lord." This she gave with splendid energy. Her only air, "Thou didst blow with Thy wind" (with its quaint "ground bass" in the accompaniment), was sung with unexceptionable taste and warmly applauded; and, indeed, had Mr. Costa been disposed, he might have accepted the demonstration of the audience as an "encore." In the duet, "The Lord is my strength," Mlle. Titien was supported with ability by Mad. Rudersdorff a practised musician, as all our musical readers are aware. The solo, however, which bore away the palm from the rest, and in the impression it created rivalled the most successful of the choruses, was "The enemy said, I will pursue." At the festivals of 1857 and 1859, this wonderfully spirited and characteristic air—allooted on both occasions to Mr. Sims Reeves—produced a sensation that is even now remembered. In *Israel in Egypt* Handel—in most of his great works so prodigal—has only granted one opportunity to the solo tenor; and, for this reason, the great singers, from the elder Braham downwards, have by

no means affected the oratorio. Mr. Reeves, however, more reverentially appreciating Handel, has, by his energetic and dramatic reading of "The enemy said," raised the tenor part in *Israel* to an importance scarcely inferior to that attributed to *The Messiah*, *Samson*, and *Judas Maccabeus*. Finely as he has delivered this air on previous occasions, he perhaps never sang it so magnificently as yesterday. The "encore" that followed was so spontaneous and unanimous that to repeat the air was no more than an act of deference to the audience, who, after the second performance, burst out into loud, enthusiastic, and long-continued cheers, in which the whole army of singers and players in the orchestra heartily joined.

After the oratorio, the National Anthem was given in such a manner as to constitute a worthy climax to a musical festival altogether without parallel. Mr. Costa then retired from the orchestra amid loud and general plaudits.

Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, JULY 26, 1862.

MUSIC IN THIS NUMBER.—Continuation of Handel's "Messiah."

Musical Instruments in the International Exhibition.

II.

Mons. Fétis's second letter, addressed to "mon cher collaborateur" of the *Revue et Gazette Musicale*, dates from Brussels, after his return from his "labors, dangers and sufferings" as Jurymen in the department of musical instruments, which he amusingly describes, before proceeding to his instructive survey of the Piano-fortes.

We may state here that the whole list of judges was as follows: Prof. Wm. Sterndale Bennett, W. Pole, the Count of Wilton, and Dr. Henry Wyld, of London; J. K. Blake (some papers have it Black), of the United States; Th. Böhm and Ernst Pauer, Austria; Sir George Clerck, Edinburgh; M. Fétis (*père*), Belgium; M. Lissajous, Paris; and Sir Gore Ouseley, Oxford. But probably there was no more industrious examiner among them than old M. Fétis, and thus he has recorded his experience:

"It does require musical virtue not to get disgusted with the piano, after examining, hearing or playing *two hundred and eighty-nine* of them, of all forms and dimensions, and especially after being persecuted by the preludes of *pianoforteurs* in all the nooks and corners of the vast enclosure of the Exhibition. After a fortnight of this uninterrupted exercise, I began to regret the good old times of the spinet and the virginal, little playthings of instruments which one carried under his arm and set upon the table, and the resonance of which died out at ten paces distance. Besides, there were no industrial exhibitions then, no *virtuosos*, or people passing themselves off for such; one took of music only enough to taste the charm of it; all was for the best.

"I had reached this point of chagrined feeling, when they transported us, my colleagues and myself, into a great hall open to all the winds, where we could choose between the sweets of neuralgia, rheumatism, or inflammation of the lungs. These little inconveniences were but the prelude to what was reserved for us there, for presently we had to undergo the bombardment of fifteen hundred brass instruments, some of which were of the calibre of Armstrong cannons. A cold sweat seizes me at the remembrance of

the roaring of certain *helicons*, which came from the North, and which the performers passed around their bodies; I mean to say that they stood upright within the sinuosities of these monstrous wide-throated instruments. The punishment of having our brains jarred by these detonations lasted not less than four sessions, and each session was from five to six hours long.—Several of my colleagues could not drink or eat in consequence. On the whole, I believe that I was the least damaged by this invasion of barbarians; but before we separated, I proposed to my honorable friends to award a unique medal to the mechanic who should transform the greater part of this brass and copper into good pans and kettles.

"Judge, then, with what pleasure I came back to the clear sonority, at once brilliant and racy, of certain choice Pianos, which exhale a perfume as it were of musical distinction! I forget the *ennui* caused me by other members of the great family of 289. Entering the Exhibition before my colleagues in the morning, I chanced sometimes to seat myself before one of those pianos of Herz, of Broadwood, or of Pleyel and Wolff, and the charm of their sounds drew me into sweet harmonic reveries, from which I was scarcely awakened by the man who inundated my feet and legs with his watering pot, under the pretext of protecting the articles exhibited from dust, and who did not forget even the keyboard in his ablutions. All the qualities which I found united in these excellent instruments recalled to me, in retrospective view, the history of the transformations and improvements in the Piano, of which I have been the contemporary. For, since the *clavecin*, which served for my first studies, since the little Silbermann piano on which I played, at the age of eight years, the Sonatas of Schubert, of Haydn and of Mozart, I had seen pass beneath my eyes the five-octave square pianos of Zumpe and of the brothers Erard; then the English pianos with *additional keys*, that is to say of five octaves and a half, which were introduced into France with the music of Dussek and Cramer, followed by an addition in the bass similar to that in the acute sounds, so as to complete a compass of six octaves, from C to C. In the mechanism for attacking the strings by the hammers, the substitution of the *échappement* for the direct action of the *pilote*; the suspension of the hammer by the pivot instead of the old hinge of leather, and the action of the piece which seizes the hammer to prevent its rebound; the substitution of thicker strings for the slender ones, which would be broken under the more energetic attack of the new hammer; the Grand Piano in the form of the Clavecin, as a consequence of the new system of mechanism, and developing gradually its sonorous power; in fine all kinds of improvements appearing when they became necessary to answer to the transformations of the music as well as to the effects demanded by great artists:—all this have I witnessed in my long career.

"It is a remarkable fact, that each of the instruments just mentioned has corresponded to the condition of music at the period when it was made. For example, it is beyond a doubt that the Sonatas and other pieces of Domenico Scarlatti were inspired by the nature of the sounds of the Clavecin, for which they were written. The detached passages dis-

tributed between the two hands, the general rapidity of the movements, the frequent ornaments, trills and groups with which this music is surcharged, are the consequences of the mechanical method of pinching the strings in the instruments used by Scarlatti and his contemporaries,—instruments in which it was impossible to prolong the tones. If you find exceptionally slow movements and sustained notes in the works of some masters of that time, it is a certain sign that these artists also shone especially on the organ, and that they transferred to their music for the Clavecin their inspirations as organists. The five-octave piano, with its light hammer propelled by the *pilote*, seems to have been made for the music of C. P. Emanuel Bach, and above all for the Sonatas of Clementi. The profound and serious genius of Dussek, with its expansive sentiment, required a sonority more powerful, a character more singing; he arrives in England in 1792, and the Grand Piano, which Backers had invented there in 1776, with the system of operating the hammer known as *the English action*, was there perfected for the great artist by his friend John Broadwood; it would seem as if this were the last limit of the Art.

"But now here comes the genius of Beethoven, demanding of the piano accents powerful enough, varied enough, to express the symphonic ideas, which he wished to apply there; and here is Hummel, who, if he does not rise to the same height of creative ideas, is his superior in the talent for execution, and demands of the instrument delicacies of articulation which it never knew before. The piano makers are inevitably obliged to satisfy these new wants: it becomes the end of their labors to obtain the greatest possible sonority; and Sebastian Erard, by an effort of genius, creates the means of realizing all the *nuances* of articulation called for by the most skilful pianists of the new school."

M. Fétis goes on to speak of the qualities required of the Piano-Forte to-day: that is, of the piano of the artist and the concert room. It must unite all kinds of perfections. It must have not only *powerful* tone, but *distinction* (that is a great word with him) in the quality of tone, the *timbre*; for if the maker only aims to produce as much sonority as possible, he gets merely *gross sound*, of a common quality. It must have equality of tone through the whole compass; it must have the *singing* quality, and at the same time must *damp* readily; and then the action must be perfect, the keys obedient to the slightest touch, the most delicate shade of articulation, and so forth. He then proceeds to pass in review the Pianos exhibited from different countries, beginning properly with the country which played the host on this occasion, with England. He says:

"My colleagues and I have remarked, with regret, that most of the English makers seem to have lost sight of this ideal of the piano, to which all the resources of their art should tend.—Among those, whose instruments figure at the International Exhibition, there are few who have not presented us a model of their invention of a mechanism for the repetition of the note. To see the efforts of their imagination to attain this kind of merit, you would be tempted to believe that they consider it the *ne plus ultra* of the qualities of a true instrument.

"But of what use are all these inventions

more or less imperfect? Much more important are the essential qualities of sound, of *timbre*, of equality, of finished workmanship; and these, I must say, we have seen with pain that the greater number of the English manufacturers neglect. Even old houses, which formerly enjoyed a justly acquired fame, have fallen off in their productions. Mr. Henry Broadwood, alone, has not only maintained intact the secular glory of his ancestors, but he has gone on with the time, and the different pianos from his factories offer to the Exhibition the realization of the perfect ideal of this class of instruments. They are four in number, grand concert form, the cases of ebony from Coromandel and of rosewood. These pianos satisfy in the completest manner all the conditions of sonority, of distinction and of mechanism required in the piano of an artist. I must mention here an important improvement introduced in the new grand pianos of the house of John Broadwood & Sons. It consists in a new arrangement of the iron barrier to balance the traction of the strings and secure the solidity of the instrument. These barriers, it cannot be denied, are an awkward necessity, because, on the one hand, they often give a ferruginous *timbre* to the sound, while, on the other hand, they load the instruments. We have seen in the Exhibition grand pianos, which had not less than six big iron bars. Mr. Broadwood has replaced all this apparatus by a single buttress of forged iron, whose resistance to the pulling of the strings is equal to that of all the barriers hitherto employed.

"After the Broadwood pianos came those of Hopkinson, whose merit was remarked at the Exposition in Paris in 1855. Their sonority has a great deal of power, a little too much perhaps, for one would like to find a little more distinction of *timbre*. For the rest, Mr. Hopkinson is uncontestedly a good maker, in whom you remark especially the qualities of a mechanician. His fertility in ingenious resources manifests itself in the mechanism of his instruments, and in certain particular effects, such, for example, as a pedal, which raises the sounds of the upper part of the piano by an octave, giving them the character of harmonic sounds, and making them produce agreeable effects of contrast with the natural sounds."

Other makers mentioned with approbation by M. Fétils, are Kirkman, Harrison, Brinsmead, &c. But most of the other English makers represented in the Exhibition, he says, have neglected the prime essential of a good instrument, *sonority*. "In the most of their pianos we have found only woolly, or meagre, or nasal, or cavernous sounds; evidently there are on a bad way."

M. Fétils claims a general superiority for the pianos from the French makers, and names those of MM. Blanchet, Boisselot, Kriegelstein, Montal, and Wölfel. But he places the two great houses of Paris (that of Herz, and that of Pleyel, Wolff & Co.) high above all in equal trinity with Broadwood. We reserve what he says of their works to another time. His opinion of the French pianos as compared with the English, in respect of general excellence, we find confirmed by a German report in a Vienna newspaper, from which we translate a single sentence: "Between the Pleyel and Herz pianos and the last French piano in the Exhibition we find no such wide distance, as between the best and the worst of the German division, or the English."

PROMENADE CONCERTS.—It was no fault of the excellent orchestra of the ORCHESTRAL UNION, if the second of these brilliant entertainments failed to fill the Music Hall full of listeners last Saturday evening. Still there was a perceptible increase of numbers and of interest. The band, in both its forms, is remarkably effective, and all the pieces were finely executed. The programme included:

1. Overture—"La Sirene."	Auber	Band
2. Concert Waltz—"Spiralen."	Strauss	Haydn
3. Quickstep—"Mocking Bird."	Kalkman	Oaborne
Fall Reed Band.		Abt
4. Grand "Battle Overture." —(by request). Lindpaintner		
5. Polka—"Saturnella."	Strauss	
6. Torch Light Dance.	Meyerbeer	
7. Military Quadrille.	Strauss	
Finale—"Sezer Galop."	Herosog	

The very grandiose, exciting Battle Overture of Lindpaintner was repeated with renewed effect. Not only is the composition skillfully "worked up" for the hearer, but the hearer was worked up for it beforehand by a marvellous description on the bills, wherein he was informed that this masterpiece of Lindpaintner was written for a great occasion in Germany, and yet that its main theme is the well-known melody, "America" ("God save the Queen" forsooth)! And thus proceeds the masterly interpretation:

The warrior (i.e. the German) rises from his slumbers: his first thought is of his country's danger; he is ready to "March on;" the music lightens his heart; he forgets his past toils—only thinks of the coming success. "VICTORY!" he marches onward. Suddenly the roll of the drum is heard from the hidden foe: he fears it not—still marches on to meet him; the Trumpet calls the warrior to battle; its sounds speak "VICTORY OR DEATH!" he charges; the foe is scattered in every direction; VICTORY is won; again he "marches on" to the sound of inspiring music; he halts; he rests; he stumbles, and dreams again of his (the German's, or the Englishman's?) beloved country, "AMERICA."

The third concert, *this evening*, will be equally brilliant and enjoyable.

JAMAICA PLAIN.—A Sacred Concert, in aid of the "Ladies' Hospital Army Association," is to be given tomorrow evening, at 8 o'clock, in the Unitarian Church of this place, by the choir of the church, under the direction of Mr. HARRIS, the organist. The rain prevented it last Sunday. The programme is an uncommonly good one, including: an Organ Fugue of Bach; a Mass by Haydn (in B flat); a movement from a Beethoven Sonata on the organ; selections from "Elijah"; Duet from "Moses in Egypt"; "Battle Prayer" by Himmel, &c., &c. Horse cars leave for Boston after the concert.

Mr. CHARLES R. ADAMS. the sweet-voiced tenor of our Boston Oratorios and Concerts a few years since, has turned up recently in Porto Rico, where he has been singing with éclat in an Italian opera troupe, of which Mme. FABBRI is the prima donna, and her husband, Herr MULDER ("Don Ricardo Mulder" they announce him) the director. El señor Don Carlos Adams, as the Spanish bills style him, has sustained the principal tenor rôle in *Norma*, *La Traviata*, *Linda*, *I Masnadieri*, *Rigoletto*, *Lucrezia Borgia*, *La Fille du Régiment*, &c., and all the journals praise him, sincerely and worthily no doubt, albeit sometimes in that superlative style in which the Spaniards indulge so easily. One of them says: "El Sr. Adams, the tenor, was magnificent, and sang with the taste and skill which proves him an artist destined to realize the greatest expectations." "The little romance *La donna e mobile* called forth unbounded applause" (of course it did.) For Madame Fabbri, who is really a very superior dramatic singer, as we all know, no terms will serve these warm-blooded critics short of "the sublime," "the inimitable," "the incomparable"; "la Sra. Fabbri rose to the height of the sublime," &c.

The NEW YORK INSTITUTION FOR THE BLIND held its annual summer concert on the 30th of June, under the direction of its able professors, S. LASAR in vocal, and A. REIFF in instrumental music. The

programme (executed by the pupils) shows a disposition not to be afraid of good things. Here it is:

1. Introduction.	Band	
2. Chorus—"First Mass."		Haydn
3. Solo—"Shower of Pearls."		Oaborne
4. Song—"In Foreign Lands."		Abt
5. Madrigal—"Now is the Month of Maying" A.D. 1596		Morley
6. Solo—"Piano Nocturne."		Reissiger
7. Solo and Chorus—"Oh! come unto me." and "His yoke is easy." "Messiah."		Handel
8. Quartet—"Orpheus, with his lute."		McFaren
9. Grand March.		Band
10. Duet—Piano.		
11. Four Part Songs.—a. "Swift as a dash." Rossini.—"Come, sing this song with me."—Martini		
b. "It is well we should be gay." S. Lazar—o.		
12. Song—"The dearest spot on earth to me." Wrighton		
13. Solo and Chorus, "Arin! arm! ye brave," and "We come! we come!" "Judas Macabreus." Handel		
14. Quickstep.		Band
15. Terzette—"The Lily."		H. C. Timm
16. Song—"The Mother's Song."		Küklen
17. Solo—"Charity." Variations.		C. Grobe
18. Chorus—"Sing unto God." "Judas Macabreus." Handel		
19. Solo, Piano—"Spring Flowers."		W. Juchu
20. Parting Song—"Let us say farewell." S. Lazar		
21. Finale.		Band

Music Abroad.

London.

The International Exhibition has drawn together nearly all the famous pianists, both of the new school and the classical. The two following notices (from the *Times* of June 30) serve to contrast the foremost representatives of either kind. To how many of us has not Thalberg grown old, while Beethoven continues to grow new!

THALBERG'S MATINEES.—The third matinée (and last but one) on Saturday brought a host of amateurs to the Hanover-Square Rooms, and was, perhaps, more interesting than either of its precursors. Among the novelties was a brilliant *fantasia* (MS.) on two of the most admired airs in the *Traviata*, a piece in which are displayed to singular advantage the mechanical ingenuity and knowledge of "effect" that place M. Thalberg, *longo intervallo*, in front of all aspirants to the crown of "virtuosity." His execution of this, as of his well-known *fantasia* on the duet and *preghiera* from *La Sonnambula*—a splendid piece in his way—and still better, of his spirited and masterly *Tarantella*, was nothing short of incomparable. Besides the foregoing, we had two of the compositions by means of which M. Thalberg gained some of his earliest and brightest laurels—the Study in A minor (with the "repeated notes"), and the never-to-be-forgotten *Andante* in D flat, which for the first time exhibited the superb *virtuoso* in a sentimental mood. These were welcomed as old and much-esteemed friends, whose features, in spite of long protracted absence, are still vividly impressed upon the memory. Further extracts from the really valuable work, *The Art of Singing, applied to the Piano*—viz., transcriptions of Beethoven's "Adelaide" and a romance in Weber's *Preciosa*; the *Marche Funèbre*, belonging to one of Chopin's solo sonatas; another leaf from the portfolio of the self-styled "Pianist of the Fourth Class" (*Prélude de mon Temps*), who, instead of giving new "Barbières" and "Guillaume-Tells" to the world, is solacing years with the production of *feuillets d'Album* for the "piano à queue;" and last, not least, his own new and very original *Ballade*, were M. Thalberg's remaining contributions to the programme. Of all his recent works this *Ballade* is the most thoroughly genuine and beautiful; and that it is destined to attain the same degree of popularity here which it already enjoys in Paris, where it was first publicly performed, may be taken for granted. Rossini's "*Prélude de mon Temps*," a sequel to the *Prélude de l'Ancien Régime*, introduced at the second matinée, is in every respect as interesting as its companion. The applause that greeted M. Thalberg at the end of each of his performances was hearty, vehement, and unanimous. He was recalled repeatedly, but in every instance declined to accept "encores"—most discreetly, we think, although it must doubtless have cost him some effort not to accede to such unequivocal demonstrations as were elicited by the *Tarantella*, the "*Ballade*," &c. Never in our remembrance was he in better play. The programme of the fourth matinée (this day week), besides other attractions, includes the *Prélude de l'Avenir*—completing the illustrations of "Past," "Present" and "Future," designed by Rossini in these peculiar rhapsodies; the universally renowned *fantasia* on the *preghiera* from *Mosè*; and a grand sonata by Beethoven, for piano-forte and violin, in which M. Thalberg will be associated with Herr Joachim.

BEETHOVEN RECITALS.—While the dazzling feats of M. Thalberg are week after week crowding the concert rooms in Hanover-square, M. Charles Halle's "recitals" of Beethoven's pianoforte sonatas are attracting another kind of audience to St. James's hall. M. Halle already approaches the termination of the arduous and honorable task he has this year for the second time imposed upon himself—only two more "recitals" (comprising the last six sonatas) remaining to be given. At the fifth he wisely discarded the sonatinas, Op. 49, which are merely bagatelles, substituting the beautiful *Andante* in F, originally intended for the Grand Sonata dedicated to Count Waldstein, but rejected by the not easily satisfied composer, for the short introductory *adagio* which now takes its place, and the "32 Variations on an Original Theme, in C minor"—one of the most strikingly "original" inspirations of Beethoven. At the 6th recital, on Saturday, which was more numerously attended than any of the others, the programme comprised the magnificent Sonata in F minor, Op. 57, which Cranz, the Hamburg music publisher (not Beethoven, who hated fantastic and affected titles), christened "*Sonata Appassionata*." How M. Halle performs this great work it is needless to relate; but it may be readily understood that, on such an occasion he took more than ordinary pains. Still more welcome, nevertheless, because so seldom heard, were the Ops. 54, 78, and 79. The first (in F) has occasionally been promised at the Monday Popular Concerts, the director of which admirable entertainments is hardly open to the charge of being wanting in eclecticism; but, for reasons unexplained, it has invariably been postponed. Why, we are at a loss to guess, inasmuch as, though one of the shortest, it is one of the most decidedly effective of all the 32 sonatas. The second (in F sharp), as romantic and beautiful as the other is vigorous, has, we presume, been left in abeyance chiefly on account of the difficult key (six sharps) in which it is set. It used to be a great favorite some years ago with the patrons of Madame Arabella Goddard's *soirées*, where the latest and most recondite of Beethoven's sonatas first came into vogue; and no wonder, for, while demanding rare perfection both of mechanism and style in its performance, when these are at hand it cannot fail to delight a really musical assembly, notwithstanding its tranquil and unobtrusive character. The third (in G)—of a less elaborate cast than either of its companions—but for its boldly independent form might have been one of the earliest efforts of the composer, who was fluent and masterly even before he had attained absolute individuality, and who may be said to have first equalled Mozart and then thrown off his allegiance. "Op. 79" has been styled "*The Queen of Sonatinas*"—sonatina being the name for a short and easy sonata; but endless sonatas on the largest scale exist which are unable to boast of half its invention or a tenth part of its beauties.—These three comparatively unfamiliar pieces invested the sixth "recital" with an attraction apart, and, played in M. Halle's most careful manner (his execution of "Op. 54" was a model of finished excellence), were listened to with intense gratification.—The last two "recitals" (July 4th and 11th) comprise the whole of the latest sonatas, and will naturally, on that account alone, be the most interesting of the series.

The introduction of a vocal piece between each two sonatas is an agreeable relief. The singer on Saturday was Miss Banks, who in Dussek's extremely popular canzonet, "Name the glad day" (one of the valuable "revivals" for which the musical world has to thank the Monday Popular Concerts), and Mr. Henry Smart's graceful song, "Dawn gentle flower," maintained her rising and well earned reputation. Mr. Harold Thomas was the accompanist.

GARIBALDI'S APPEAL.—A grand morning concert was given in St. James's Hall in answer to Garibaldi's appeal to the women of Italy for aid in the establishment of schools in their liberated land. The response was as noble as the call which drew it forth. It is a curious circumstance that, with two Italian opera-houses open in London, the only ladies nationally qualified to reply on the part of this metropolis should have been the sisters Carlotta and Barbara Marchisio. Their male compatriots, however, were in stronger force, numbering on their muster-roll Signors Giuglini, Giraldoni, Armandi, Belletti, Pintuti, Ciabatta, Campana, Li Calsi, Arditi, and Piatti. This powerful array of Italian vocal and instrument, al talent was further strengthened by the ready aid of Mad. Lind-Goldschmidt, Mad. Luise Michal, Mad. Guerrabella, Mlle. Titens, M. Rubinstein, M. Alfred Jaell, Mr. Otto Goldschmidt, and Mr. Sims Reeves. The entertainment was worthy the cause in which it was given. All the artists sang and played as if inspired with a strong sympathetic alliance for the attainment of a good end.

SIG. SCHIRÀ'S NEW OPERA.—The opera of Sig. Schirà, to which reference was made in the prospectus of Her Majesty's Theatre, is underlined. The name of the new work is *Nicolo De' Lappi*. The subject is borrowed from a romance by Massimo d'Azelegio, founded on one of the most stirring and memorable passages of Florentine history.

Italy.

"A Traveller" writes to a London paper, under date of Feb. 4, as follows:

The only subject on which the Italians of Southern Italy are allowed to express their opinion freely at the present moment is, the merit or demerit of the lyric drama. Even on that subject, however, they have few novelties to amuse their politically-imprisoned minds. Verdi has done nothing for the Carnival season, Ricci and Rossi are equally silent—whilst Pacini only promises for the future. In such a state of things, the production of a new opera at San Carlo, by a comparatively new master, is an event of much interest in this part of the world. A few nights since San Carlo presented its old crowded aspect of the days of Barbaja, when Bellini, Donizetti, and Rossini were writing for the cradle of modern song. Nicolo di Gioia's new opera, *Folco d'Arles*, was the object of attraction. The young composer had already written one or two harmonious trifles for minor theatres, the success of which induced him to try his powers on a tragic subject. The author of the libretto is the well-known Cammarano. He has taken his subject from Victor Hugo's *Ruy Blas*—and has thus treated it. The Countess Elfrida, Queen of Provence, is enamoured of Folco. Arthur, a grandee of the kingdom, a lover by her despised, avenges himself by making her believe that Folco is his cousin, and of most noble birth, while he is in fact one of his servants. The Queen makes him a knight; and he having thus arrived, by fortune and merit, to be a commander-in-chief, she is about to marry him, when Arthur exposes his base origin. Folco kills Arthur and then himself. The libretto contains the usual amount of cleverly accented verse, with perhaps a little more than the usual quantity of twaddle. The singers known favorably in the musical world who executed the opera were the *prima donna* Tadolini and the *baritone* De Bassini. The general character of the music is light, flowing, and melodious. The author was the last pupil to whom Donizetti gave instructions, and much of the promise of the present opera is traceable to the *mastro's* inspirations. There were five or six *meilleurs* which gained universal applause. One of these was a polonaise by Tadolini—original and popular in its character—and which, I fancy, will travel to the north. De Bassini contributed greatly to the success of the other favorite pieces of the opera. He is an artist who will certainly take a high rank in London and Paris at no distant period. The opera was a decided hit; and the general opinion is, that Gioia will form a valuable addition to the living artists of the day. He possesses, all agree, originality and the faculty of pleasing; his school is that of Ballini and Donizetti. Tadolini is about to throw up her engagement at Naples—why I know not. Some of the journals, as usual, are extravagant in their praises of the new opera; but the opinion of the critical in the land of critics is, that in the sentimental *buffo* Gioia may one day approach to the excellence of the *Don Pasquale* of his *mastro*.

I mentioned the promises of Pacini. The author of *Safia*, who has already enriched Italian art with so many works, has recently completed several new musical pieces, destined to entwine fresh laurels around the brows of the great master. Besides *Alban Cameron*, which will shortly be produced at Venice, and which has been long completed, Pacini has despatched to Naples *La Zaffira*, a serio-comic opera, melo-dramatized by A. D. Lanziere, for the Teatro Nuovo. Up to the present time it has not been accepted by the impresario. He is also completing *L'Assedia di Leyda*, a grand serious opera, to be represented we know not where. We are also awaiting from his pen *Il Nicolo de' Lappi*, and an opera of a fantastic character, entitled *Belfagor*.

I may conclude my musical gossip by announcing from an Italian journal, the publication of a new work by Rossini, suggested by the hymn of Bacchus. It is described a grand work for a bass, or rather for a chorus in which a principal bass acts, as the corpheus of the ancients. The composition is conducted with wonderful art throughout. The prelude is characterized by an indescribable delicacy and voluptuousness which is truly Greek, and which penetrates every mind through the ear,—whilst the finale is remarkable for the alterations of sound, and for the harmonious echo which repeats through the long halls the songs of youth revelling in love and wine.

Special Notices.

DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF THE

LATEST MUSIC.

Published by Oliver Ditson & Co.

Vocal, with Piano Accompaniment.

He died, yet is not dead. Song. Carl Lorenz. 25

A simple, unpretending composition, yet evidently the production of a master.

She may smile on many, she will love but one. H. Glover. 25

This song has attained great popularity in London, and is nightly sung by the famous English tenor, Sims Reeves.

Difficult to choose. L. Marshall. 25

A highly amusing song, very easy and singable.

They tell me she is sleeping. W. H. Doane. 25

Softly into Heaven she faded. W. Williams. 25

Two songs of very similar character. Lovers of plaintive music will find these unexceptionable both as regards words and music.

Hip! Zoo, Zoo. Patriotic song. J. W. Turner. 25

A song full of "dash" and spirit. If it does not become all the rage it is not the fault of the versatile and accomplished author.

Instrumental Music.

Turkish march. Mozart. 25

This gem, performed at the Promenade Concerts with such success, is from one of Mozart's sonatas. If any one feels unwilling to purchase the sonata to obtain the march, it may be obtained in the form above named.

Nobil signor. (Page's air from "Huguenots.") Flute and Piano. Pratten. 25

No caso equal. (Page's air from "Huguenots.") Flute and Piano. Pratten. 25

Tutto e sprezz. (Tenor air from "Sicilian Vespers.") Flute and Piano. Pratten. 25

Easy arrangements, which strictly adhere to the original air and give them in the most clear and striking form. They are written for the amusement of two amateurs, the one a pianist, the other a flute-player, and consequently have few difficulties for either instrument.

Books.

THE MODERN SCHOOL FOR THE ORGAN. A New, Progressive and Practical Method. In Three Parts. By John Zundel. Complete \$3.00 In Parts.—Part I, \$1.50, Part II, \$2.00

Mr. Zundel's long experience not only as an Organist but as a successful teacher is a sufficient guarantee of the excellence of this work and of its great utility. A slight examination even of its pages will convince any one of its rare adaptation to the wants of beginners, as also to advanced players. It embodies in plain language a great fund of practical information on points in organ playing of the utmost importance to all who would become thoroughly conversant with the capabilities of the instrument, but which are seldom so thoroughly treated and so masterly explained. This "Modern School" must become the Standard Method of Organ Study.

MUSIC BY MAIL.—Music is sent by mail, the expense being about one cent on each piece. Persons at a distance will find the conveyance a saving of time and expense in obtaining supplies. Books can also be sent at the rate of one cent per ounce. This applies to any distance under three thousand miles; beyond that it is double.

